

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

General Property Information		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 016-0016	
District Name(s):	The Meadow (Meadow Farm -Meadow Stud – Meadow Event Park)		
District or Selected Building Date(s):	1930-1980	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post	Open to the Public? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Main District	Doswell		
Streets and/or Routes:	Route 30 – Route 652	City:	Zip: 23047
County or Ind. City:	Caroline County		
	USGS Quad(s):	Ashland	

Physical Character of General Surroundings	
Acreage:	347
Setting (choose one):	<input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor
<p>Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: The Meadow is the site of the former Meadow Stud, founded in the 1930's by Christopher Chenery, who returned to his former family farm after gaining financial success as a young man. He found the farm in an advanced state of disrepair but soon restored it and established his "Empire Built on Broodmares". Although much of the farm has changed due to its new usage as an event park and equestrian center, several sites remain intact. The Northern portion of the farm features the original pump house and well house with their white siding with blue trim. A retaining pond lies just north of these structures and a concrete block stairwell separates the two buildings and allows easy access to the lanes above and to the south of them. Three stables remain to the north of the present house. All of these stables remain in very good condition. Many ancient trees grace the landscape as well as a boxwood garden cultivated by Mrs. Helen Chenery in the 1930's. There is a cemetery on the gently sloping hill to the southwest of the home site as well as an equestrian cemetery to the east. Three of the stables most important founding horses rest there (Imperatrice (Grand-dam of Secretariat), Sun Beau (whose Grandsire was Fair Play – sire of Man O' War) and Hill Prince who was 1950 Horse of the Year.) as well as a pony named "Blue". To the north of the site sits "The Cove". This site was most important in the operation of the farm as it was the meadow in which the broodmares with their young foals grazed throughout the day. This site is no longer a part of the district but the view shed is intact and is currently in agricultural use and therefore safe for future generations. On the southern side of Route 30 is the foaling shed (moved from its former location near the broodmare barns (no longer in existence) and a training barn which housed Riva Ridge and Secretariat and approximately one half of the training track on which they first ran.</p>	
Ownership Categories:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal
General District Information	
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district? Examples include: Dwelling, Store, Barn, etc...	
Farm, Thoroughbred Breeding and Training	
What are the current uses? (if other than the historical use)	State Fair, Equestrian Event Site
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:	Stables white clapboard siding w/blue trim as shown historically in the colors of the Meadows racing silks
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:	Christopher Chenery – owner circa 1930's built the barns to reflect the style of those at Bullfield in nearby Hanover County.
Are there any known threats to this district?	

General Description of District: (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The most prominent feature of today's Meadow is the stable complex to the north of the home site. The three white structures feature the white clapboard siding accented with blue trim. These were the stables that were closest to the house and historically housed the yearlings and stallions of the farm.

The easternmost stable's easternmost stall was traditionally reserved for the year's most promising young colt. This stall housed both Riva Ridge 1972 winner of both the Kentucky Derby and the Belmont and Secretariat 1973 winner of the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes and the Belmont – making him the first Triple Winner since Citation in 1948. The Meadow has the distinction of being the only farm to win five of the six Triple Crown races in two consecutive years.

The second stable is L-shaped and also housed the yearlings along with other horses that came to the Meadow. The corner of this stable was the office of Farm Manager Howard Gentry who grew up at Ellerslie in Charlottesville. This site features two rooms with a fireplace still in place and a tack room with harness racks still on the bead-board wall. The office area with the fireplace has brick flooring. This area is being looked at for possible restoration in order to further tell the story of day to day life at the farm.

The westernmost barn was used to house stallions and features ten stalls and a small office.

There are two cemeteries on the site. The equine cemetery has four graves marked with granite headstones. On a gently sloping hill to the southwest of the home site is a family cemetery with its boundaries marked by a low brick wall. It is said that these graves were never marked and are the final resting places of members of the Charles Dabney Morris family who founded the Meadow in the 1800's, members of the Barton Winston Morris, M.D. family of nearby Glamorgan, members of the James Hunter family of nearby Elangowan and "The Tutor". Family legend is that a young man from a school up north – usually said to be Yale – came down to tutor the Hunter children at Elangowan during the War. He fell ill and died and the family was unable to send his body home so he was buried in the family cemetery at the Meadow.

The front lawn of the home site features a boxwood garden that Mrs. Helen Chenery planted in part to help screen the view and sound of cars traveling along Route 30. Today, this boxwood garden creates a lawn that stretches from the highway to the present site. Throughout the northern part of the site, huge, ancient trees grace the landscape. Many are identified by plaques at their bases.

The southernmost portion of the site features one intact training barn where the stall that housed Riva Ridge and Secretariat is noted by a plaque. The foaling shed in which Secretariat was born has been removed from its former location in the broodmare complex (now the site of the Farm Bureau building) to a location just east of the training barn. The foaling shed has had some repairs (necessary over the years and needed in order to stabilize the shed for its move). The roof has been replaced and the northernmost wall has been rebuilt. The shed still has three of its four walls intact with historic material. The wall that adjoins the little room where an employee would stay to observe the foaling is intact. The prominent feature of this wall is a window placed higher than it would normally be as to encourage the person overseeing the foaling to stand and pay attention to his duties rather than to be comfortable in a sitting position and perhaps fall asleep during the long nights that sometimes happened during a foaling.

Also at this site is approximately one half of the training track upon which both Riva Ridge and Secretariat got their first taste of the lives that they would lead that would gain national prominence for their home farm. This track was also the site of the "Camptown Races" from 1953 until 1958. The races were begun to raise money for the Ashland War Memorial Association. Dick Gillis, the mayor of Ashland at the time, suggested the name "Camptown Races" in honor of the popular Stephen Foster song. Over time, the Camptown Races spawned the Varina and Goochland races, creating a sort of Virginia Triple Crown. The event grew so in popularity that it was no longer feasible to have it at the Meadow and it went to Mannheim Farm in Ashland in order to accommodate the thousands of cars and visitors that came to this overwhelmingly successful event.

Significance Statement: Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

The Meadow is known first and foremost as the birthplace of racing legend Secretariat. He raced into history in June of 1973 as he won the Triple Crown - setting new track records for the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes and winning the Belmont Stakes by thirty one lengths - in a record time that has never been nor will likely ever be bested. Bred at Claiborne Farm in Kentucky and foaled at the Meadow in Virginia, he is Virginia's favorite son of thoroughbred racing. His worldwide fame and appeal insured the Meadows place in history.

The unsung hero of the Meadow is Riva Ridge who took two of the Triple Crown races to year previous to Secretariat's legendary wins. Bred at the Meadow and foaled in Kentucky he was also a horse who brought the Meadow to national recognition. Were it now for Riva Ridge's wins, the Meadow may have been sold and Secretariat would have raced under another stable's colors. Riva was also the first Meadow colt to win the Kentucky Derby. Christopher Chenery's dream was to race a Derby winner and Riva Ridge made that dream come true. It is said that on the day of Riva's Derby, a television was placed near Mr. Chenery's hospital bed so that he could see the race. Although he was in very poor health at the time, he was able to watch the race on television. Legend is that his nurse looked at him and said "Mr. Chenery, your horse just won the Derby." Christopher Chenery held up his hand in glory as a tear rolled down his cheek. He passed away before being able to witness the blazing glory that his other colt would create the following year.

Christopher Chenery came home to his family's ancestral farm in the thirties to reconstruct the damage that war and the depression had done. He rebuilt the family home and created the "Empire Built on Broodmares". Born into a family impoverished by the Civil War, Christopher Chenery was born with a lifelong love of horses. He worked for nearby farms in order to raise money to better his circumstances. He attended Randolph Macon College but after two years, left to take a job surveying for a railroad. He and his brother Bill worked together, each studying for two years and then working for two years in order that both could finish their education. After completing his education at Washington and Lee University, he went west where he bettered his financial status and also met Helen Bates who would become his wife. After living a while in Virginia, he went to New York where he met venture capitalist George Ohrstrom and formed Federal Water Service Corporation buying up small utilities nationwide. It wasn't long before he became a millionaire. He could now indulge his love of horses and created a riding club. This club became Boulder Brook a riding club, polo club, and equestrian training facility who has among its alumnae a young lady name Jacqueline Bouvier who would rise to fame as the First Lady to President John F. Kennedy. At age fifty, Christopher Chenery suffered a heart attack. He decided to take on a less stressful life and moved his family back to Virginia to the Meadow in 1937. There he built his racing legacy that would bring his family and farm to national and worldwide prominence to a degree that he couldn't have imagined.

Helen (Penny) Chenery was born in 1922 in New York. She inherited her father's deep love for horses. She was the perfect choice to take over the reins of the Meadow when her father's health began to decline and she did a wonderful job of keeping the stable and its horses intact during family and financial crisis. Being a woman alone in a man's sport, she rose above those around her. She took over the Meadow and created a winning team that would take the Meadow to legendary status. She held onto the farm as long as she could but eventually had to sell it to settle estate taxes. She then focused on breeding and racing horses. From 1976 to 1984, she served as President of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association. In 1976, she became a member of the Executive Committee of the American Horse Council in Washington D.C. In 1983, Penny Chenery was one of the first three women to be admitted as members of The Jockey Club. She helped found the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, an organization that rescues Thoroughbreds no longer able to compete from neglect, abuse and slaughter. Penny Chenery also bred Saratoga Dew who was the first

New York bred horse to win an Eclipse Award in 1992 as the American Champion Three Year Old Filly. In 2003, Arlington Park established the annual “Penny Chenery Distinguished Woman in Racing Award”. In 2006, the National Thoroughbred Racing Association honored her with an Eclipse Award of Merit for a lifetime of outstanding achievement in thoroughbred racing. In 2009, was awarded the Smith College Medal for extraordinary professional achievement and outstanding service to her community. She was the subject of the 2010 motion picture “Secretariat” and had a cameo role in the film.

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐Ms. ☒ Miss ☐ Donna L Chasen

(Name)

PO Box 3454

Fredericksburg

VA

22402

(Address)

(City)

e)

(Zip Code)

saveidlewild@yahoo.com

434-444-1777

(Email Address)

(Daytime telephone including area code)

Applicant's Signature:

Date: October 9, 2012

Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the department to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. ☒ Mrs. ☐ Dr. ☐Miss ☐ Ms. ☐ Hon. ☐

County Administrator

Charles Culley

(Name)

(Position)

Caroline County

PO Box 447

(Locality)

VA

(Address)

Bowling Green

22327

804-633-5380

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

(Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

The Meadow is known worldwide due to its association with the legendary Secretariat. Upon further research I found that the Meadow has a much larger scope and story to tell. The site is one of great honor and pride to the horse community of Virginia and of equestrians nation and worldwide. Virginia is known for its legacy of great horses both for sport and historically known (such as Traveller the war steed and companion of General Robert E Lee) and The Meadow is an intricate part of this story.

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☒ No ☐